



Last Updated: 03/09/2022

## **Introduction of Virginia Medicaid Preferred Drug List (PDL) Program for Pharmacy Services**

The purpose of this memorandum is to introduce providers to Virginia Medicaid's Preferred Drug List (PDL), which will be implemented beginning January 2004. The PDL is effective for the Medicaid, MEDALLION, and FAMIS-Plus (formerly known as Medicaid for children) fee- for-service populations. The PDL does not apply to enrollees being served by the Managed Care Organizations, or to FAMIS enrollees. The Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) is implementing this program to provide clinically effective and safe drugs to its clients at the best available price. Your assistance with this program is critical to its success.

The PDL provides a selection of therapeutically effective products for which the Medicaid program will allow payment without restriction. It is a listing of preferred drugs by therapeutic class. Specific drug products within these classes have been designated by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee as "preferred". In the designated classes, drug products that do not appear on the PDL will be subject to prior authorization (PA). In an effort to ensure appropriate drug therapy with the least risk to the recipient and that is cost effective, other drugs, as recommended by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, may be subject to prior authorization. No patient will be left without appropriate drug therapy under this initiative.

The P&T Committee meetings have been open to the public and comments have been received from patients, providers, manufacturers, and constituency groups. The Committee has defined the therapeutic classes that will be the subject of the initial implementation for January 2004. Additional drug classes will be included in the PDL program in April and July 2004. A list of the preferred drugs within each class for the January implementation is attached with this memo.



## MEDICAID MEMO

Certain categories of drug products for fragile populations are not affected by the PDL, such as antipsychotics and drugs for cancer or HIV.

The therapeutic classes that are the focus of the initial January implementation are:

- Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs)
- H2 Antagonists
- Nasal Steroids
- Second Generation Antihistamines (Low-Sedating or Non-Sedating)
- Selective Cox-2 Inhibitors and NSAIDS
- HMG CoA Reductase Inhibitors (Statins)
- Sedative Hypnotics
- Beta Adrenergics
- Inhaled Corticosteroids
- Angiotensin Converting Enzyme Inhibitors (ACE Inhibitors)
- Angiotensin II Receptor Blocking Agents (ARBs)
- Calcium Channel Blockers
- Beta blockers

There is a complete list of the pharmaceutical products listed on the Virginia Preferred Drug List at <http://www.dmas.state.va.us/pharm-home.htm> or at <http://virginia.fhsc.com>.

### **Prior Authorization Process**

The PDL program will be implemented on January 5, 2004, beginning with informational messages ("soft edits") to the pharmacists. This will allow pharmacists the opportunity to inform the client of the prior authorization (PA) requirement on the next request. Full prior authorization requirements ("hard edits") will be implemented for the first set of drug classes during January and February 2004. The PDL phase in schedule for the first 13 drug classes to be implemented are enclosed with this memo.

A message regarding PA will be returned when a non-preferred drug is dispensed.



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PAs can be initiated by written, faxed, or telephone request. Prescribers can initiate PA requests by letter, by faxing the enclosed form to 800-932-6651, or by contacting the First Health Services' Clinical Call Center at 800-932-6648. These telephone numbers will be available beginning December 1, 2003, to request prior authorization of drugs not on the preferred list if medically indicated for the patient. PA requests by fax or mail will be responded to within 24 hours of receipt. A copy of the PA form is available at <http://www.dmas.state.va.us/pharm-home.htm> or at <http://virginia.fhsc.com>. There are provisions for a 72-hour emergency supply of necessary medications and an appeals process.

### **Training**

DMAS will be providing training through professional organizations and groups beginning in early December. Also, pharmacy information will be posted to two web sites: [www.dmas.state.va.us](http://www.dmas.state.va.us) for Medicaid regulations, memos, notices, and training schedules, and <http://virginia.fhsc.com> for technical information and details on the PA process. The First Health Clinical Call Center will be operational beginning December 1, 2003, to answer questions and to process prospective prior authorization requests.

Additional information and Provider Manual updates will be sent as necessary. Comments regarding this program may be sent to the P&T Committee at [pdlinput@dmas.state.va.us](mailto:pdlinput@dmas.state.va.us).

The Department of Medical Assistance Services' mission is to provide a system of high quality comprehensive health services to qualifying Virginians and their families. Institution of the Preferred Drug List will allow DMAS to continue to perform its mission by maintaining quality and cost-effectiveness. We look forward to working with you, the provider community, to assist in making this endeavor a success.

### **ELIGIBILITY AND CLAIMS STATUS INFORMATION**



## MEDICAID MEMO

DMAS offers a web-based Internet option to access information regarding Medicaid eligibility, claims status, check status, service limits, prior authorization, and pharmacy prescriber identification information. The website address to use to enroll for access to this system is <http://virginia.fhsc.com>. The MediCall voice response system will provide the same information and can be accessed by calling 800-884-9730 or 800-772-9996. Both options are available at no cost to the provider.

### COPIES OF MANUALS

DMAS publishes electronic and printable copies of its provider manuals and Medicaid Memoranda on the DMAS website at [www.dmas.state.va.us](http://www.dmas.state.va.us). Refer to the Provider Column to find Medicaid and SLH provider manuals or click on "Medicaid Memos to Providers" to view Medicaid Memoranda. The Internet is the most efficient means to receive and review current provider information. If you do not have access to the Internet, or would like a paper copy of a manual, you can order these by contacting Commonwealth-Martin at 804-780-0076. A fee will be charged for the printing and mailing of the manuals and manual updates requested.

### "PDL/PRIOR AUTHORIZATION HELPLINE"

The First Health Clinical Call Center can be reached at **800-932-6648**, to answer your questions regarding the PDL. Requests for Prior Authorization can be initiated by letter, by faxing the enclosed form to **800-932-6651**, or by contacting the First Health Services' Clinical Call Center at **800-932-6648**. PA requests also can be mailed to:

**First Health Services  
Corporation 4300 Cox Road**

**Glen Allen, VA 23060**

**ATTN: MAP Department/VA Medicaid**